

Major General

Tajammul

Hussain Malik

Agha H Amins Note:---

This is the man who was praised by Indians and they established a commission to study his masterpiece Battle of Hilli .He

was praised by his Indian battle opponent in his book Indian Sword penetrates East Pakistan as a singularly brave man .

He was miles above pygmies like Zia , Ayub and Musharraf. When we joined the army it was inspired by his battalion 3rd Baloch's attempted coup of 23 March 1980 to wipe out despicable clown Zia and his dirty clique !

One good thing that General Beg did immediately after that glorious crash was to restore Tajammuls complete military honours and privileges. Tajammul was serving a sentence of 14 years RI for planning to liquidate all army generals and Zia on 23 March 1980 ,a brilliant scheme indeed !

We had to wait till glorious 17th August 1988 when that plane finally crashed right into the Hindu Shamshan Ghat on Basti Lal Kamal !

Tajammul has thrown light on Zias shallow personality in this interview !

May God Bless His Soul !

Major Agha H Amin (Retired)



Maj Gen (Retd) Tajammal Hussain Malik

A.H Amin

September 2001

Please tell us something about your early life, parents?

I was born on 13th June 1924, in village Thanil Kamal, Tehsil Chakwal, then District Jhelum (now District Chakwal). I spent my childhood in rural atmosphere, which at that time was quite primitive. There was no electricity, no roads, no telephones and as far as I remember no one owned even a bicycle. Radio came much later. Men, women and children wore the same dress as their ancestors put on centuries ago. There was not much difference between the rich and the poor. There were no social barriers and the living style of all the inhabitants was almost alike. A village was a self-sustained compact unit. They produced their own wheat, meat, vegetable, rice, ghee, eggs and almost everything one needs for ones simple living. The village shopkeepers were Hindus or Sikhs. Almost all purchases from the shops were on barter system. The prices of agricultural and dairy products were very low: -Wheat was sold at 1 1/4 rupees a maund. (40 Kilo) Meat 1/4 rupee a seer (Kilo) Milk - 10 seers for one rupee. Pure desi ghee - 1 1/4 seer for one rupee. Chicken weighing one seer for about four annas (1/4 rupee). These rates compared favourably with the rates laid down in “Aaeen-i- Akbari” during the Mughal Emperor Jalal ud Din Akbar’s rule, more than four hundred years ago.Both my father and mother were highly religious. I inherited my religious convictions from my parents.

Please tell us about your school / college days and any decisive influences on your personality formation / development of convictions ?

A common village boy living in rural atmosphere, as mentioned above, could not conceive any high ambitions. I had many relatives in the Army but the highest rank held by any one of them was that of a Subedar, (which was then called Viceroy Commission). In fact, as far as I remember, there was not even a single King’s Commission Officer in the whole of Tehsil

Chakwal at that time. (First IMA course passed out in 1934/35).From village school, I moved to Government High School Chakwal. Lieut General Abdul Majeed Malik and Maj General Nazar Hussain Shah were a class ahead of me. Brig Amir Gulistan Janjua, whose last appointment was Governor of NWFP, was my class fellow. I think if statistics are taken, that rural area High School produced more Brigadiers and Generals than Aitchison College and Burn Hall combined.

What were your perceptions as young man in pre-1947 India about the prevalent political conditions — Muslim League, Congress etc?

The British Indian army was a mercenary Army. Although occasionally we used to read about the political developments then taking place, yet at that time it never occurred to us that the Indian Army would be divided so soon and a new state of Pakistan would come into being as a homeland for the Muslims. It looked a fantasy.

I vividly remember when I was a cadet, I had read an article in one of the magazines, perhaps the Military Bigest, wherein, the then Commander-in-Chief Indian Army, Field Marshal Sir Claude Auckinleck, while addressing army personal at some station had said, “In ten years time, you would have all Indian Battalion Commanders, in fifteen years time you would have all Indian Division Commanders, and in twenty years time you would have an Indian Commander-in- Chief.” From this statement it would become evident that the division of Army was never visualised even at the highest level of military hierarchy, nor did the British officers ever thought of vacating their biggest colony so soon. At the most one could say that India might get dominion status in due course of time, but complete independence was still being regarded as a dream

Any memorable incidents, which left an indelible impression on your personality?

I cannot think of any particular instance, which left an indelible impression on my mind. However, by the time I was a Platoon Commander at PMA in 1954/55, my experiences, observations in life, extensive study of books of history, philosophy and religion particularly Iqbal’s book “Reconstruction of religious thought in Islam” and his Urdu poetry had convinced me of existence of God and all that is laid down in Quran. From then onwards I became a dedicated practicing Muslim and started praying regularly which continues till today. Islam is the guiding force for all my actions and reactions. Whether in peace or in war, I drew my aspirations from Islam. I pray to Almighty Allah that may He continue to guide me for the rest of my life.

Motivation for joining the Army?

I joined the Army to earn my living. When I grew up, Second World War was continuing and Army was the best profession at that time. There was no other consideration.

Please tell us something about your life as a cadet?

In 1945, I was selected for pre-cadet College Belgram (Southern India) and after the termination of Second World War in Sept 1945, all the cadets were put through another Selection Board.

In April 1946 I joined Officers Training School at Bangalore (Southern India) and on 16th Feb 1947 I was commissioned in the Rajput Regiment of the British Indian Army. (Late) General Akhtar Abdur Rehman (DG ISI) and Lieut General Jahanzeb Arbab were my course mates, though I passed out senior to both of them in the Order of Merit.

Any seniors, contemporaries who impressed you or were a decisive formative influence during cadetship?None. Experiences as a young Commissioned Officer from the date of Commission till partition?

The training at Officers Training School was aimed at moulding the very outlook on life of the cadets and not just imparting professional military training. After Commissioning, the Indian Officers were expected to behave like their masters in all aspects of their day-to-day life. The result was that in order to become a good officer, one was expected to drink, dance and even speak the Urdu language with English accent. The sooner one adjusted oneself to complete European way of life, the better one’s chances were to be regarded as a good officer.

Good annual confidential reports (ACRs) and even course reports were generally based on the outer personality of the

individual concerned and seldom any superior reporting officer tried to find out the real worth of the man. That is why when partition took place, the outlook of most of our senior officers was more British than the British themselves.

Anyone who talked about religion was considered to be a backward type and sometimes even ridiculed in public. There were no doubt some exceptions like General Sher Ali, who took pride in calling himself Muslim and openly preached Islam, but even their way of life was generally very aristocratic and Europeanised.

They could more appropriately be called, “Muslim Elites”.

The best regiments of the British Indian Army were those which had played the most treacherous part against their own countrymen particularly during the war of Independence in 1857 (which was called ‘Mutiny’ by the British and their henchmen) or those which had committed the most savage acts against unarmed Indian masses who had risen in revolt against their foreign rulers from time to time.

Items such as Sultan Tipu’s sword, captured copy of Quran from Ali Masjid during fighting against the Afghans, Regimental flags and various types of weapons belonging to the defeated armies of the Muslim rulers were displayed with pride as trophies in the Unit messes, which perhaps continues till today. A Junior Officer on joining the unit was expected to know all about the history of his unit, which in fact, was the history of treachery and savagery against his own countrymen or that of the fighting against the Ottoman or Afghan Muslim rulers. It never occurred to the young mind, at that time, what a poisonous effect it was likely to have on the development of his real personality.

Please tell us about your service profile from partition till 1958?

At the time partition took place, I was serving as a second lieutenant at the Rajput Training Centre at Fatehgarh in the United Province (UP) of India. In October 1947, a contingent of Muslim soldiers, comprised of four officers and about five hundred other ranks were repatriated to Pakistan. At first we all reported at the Frontier Force Training Centre at Abbottabad. In December 1947, I and another officer were posted to 3/8 Punjab Regiment (now 3rd Baluch Regiment) at Peshawar which was earmarked to proceed to East Pakistan.

In the first week of Jan 1948, we landed at Chittagong by the sea route. I stayed in East Pakistan up till June 1950. It was a

wonderful experience. The East Pakistanis treated us with love and affection. I had developed great liking for those people. I wish those feeling had continued but it was our own fault. We treated them as Negroes were treated in the United States of America. We considered East Pakistan as our colony. We had to pay dearly for our follies twenty-five years later. In June 1950, I was posted as GSO-3 in Military Intelligence Directorate, General Headquarters Rawalpindi. About a year later, the Indians threatened to go to war unless we vacated Kashmir.

Liaquat Ali Khan, the then Prime Minister, accepted the Indian Challenge to go to war and showed his famous “Mukka” (fist) declaring “we will break your nose if you dare to cross our borders”. Consequently both the Armies were deployed on the border and occupied their defensive positions. It was a great feeling. The entire nation was emotionally charged and every soldier took pride in being in uniform. We were prepared to revive the traditions of Muslim Armies of early period of Islam. Charged with such feeling I volunteered to go to the front line. I was posted as GSO-3 in 10 Division where I spent about 6 months or so. In early 1952 I was posted back to my unit 3/8 Punjab Regiment, now 3rd Baluch which was still deployed in their battle positions at Gujranwala. I was appointed Adjutant of the Battalion. A few months later, both the countries agreed to withdraw their armies to their peace locations and my Battalion moved to Abbottabad.

In October 1954 I was posted as Platoon Commander at PMA. Towards the end of 1955, I passed my Staff College examination and in 1956 I attended the Staff Course at Staff College, Quetta. After the termination of Staff Course I was posted as GSO-2 to the Commandant, where I stayed upto the end of 1958.

You served in former East Pakistan as a young officer in early 1950s and saw Ayub as a GOC. How would you describe Ayub at that time as a professional, a person and a senior?

General Ayub of 1948 was quite different to what he became after proclaiming Martial Law in 1958. In those days, his living style was very simple. Most of the time he used to be attired in Khaki bush-shirt and trousers at all functions, formal or informal. He had only one grey suit, which he wore in summers and winters. He used to get his uniform stitched from our unit tailor. I never saw him wearing blue patrols or any other expensive suit other than what I have said before. I had developed great liking for him. In those days I had considered him an ideal soldier.

I changed my opinion about him completely when he became the President of Pakistan or even a few years earlier when he started indulging in politics and accumulation of wealth and property.

He had known me personally and soon after he became Commander-in-Chief in 1951 he had accepted my invitation to attend a private tea party. At another occasion in 1952, when I was a company commander at Chakdara, he accepted my invitation for a lunch when he was on his way to Dir with an entourage of about 8-10 other officers.

I still have his autographed photograph, which was sent to me framed in a silver frame through his Military Secretary, when I was a Military Attache in Turkey. I passed on that framed photograph to my elder son Naveed Tajammal who still likes him whereas I had changed my opinion about him after he became the President of Pakistan.

What are your impressions about the British Officers who served in the Pakistan Army after partition?

I carried good impression about them. Major General Hill, who was our Adjutant General and Brigadier Rhodom, who was Director of Infantry used to go to their offices on bicycle and so did some other British officers, who were holding key appointments in General Headquarters.

The then Commander in Chief, General Gracy used to go to his office in a small Hillman car and from C-in-C House to General Headquarters if he saw any soldier in uniform going on foot on his way to GHQ he used to stop his car and tell him to “Hop in” and carry him up to the gates of GHQ.

Most of British Officers could be trusted for their word and standard of integrity. No doubt they had social values of their own but that was part of their own culture. On the whole they conducted themselves as good ambassadors of British Nation. Please tell us more about your tenure as an instructor at PMA and the standard of training at PMA as you saw it in the 1950s.

When I joined PMA, Brigadier Pigot was the Commandant of the Academy. He had been the Commanding Officer of General Ayub, when the latter was a junior officer in one of the Punjab Regiments, perhaps old 1st/14 Punjab. His living style was very

austere and was a highly dedicated soldier. He expected the same standard from the Platoon Commanders and the cadets. Since he had been Ayub Khan's Commanding Officer, no PSO (Principal Staff Officer) or any other Pakistani senior officer, could dare interfere in his training programmes nor he was prepared to accept any dictation from General Headquarters. He had his own style of training the cadets and he continued to do so up to the time he left the Command sometime in the middle of 1955 and returned to England. Even on the day he was leaving he inspected the unit lines and the classes and sent a note to the Adjutant to send instructions to the officers concerned to put the things right wherever he found anything wrong.

Almost every platoon commander judged his cadets by his own standard of integrity, honesty and moral values. Some of the very good cadets were thrown out because they could not be judged properly by their platoon commanders. Whereas some of the low grade cadets were brought to high position by their platoon commanders on the basis of sycophancy and deceitfulness thus laying the framework for the future.

I generally found most of the West Pakistani Platoon Commanders rather biased towards the East Pakistani Cadets. I personally had very sympathetic feelings for them, perhaps because of my early stay in East Pakistan. After their repatriation to Bangladesh out of the six East Pakistani Cadets in my Platoon, four became General Officers. How was regimental life like in the period 1947-1965.

When Pakistan came into being, we had no industry which could provide material for soldiers' uniform or other military equipment. Even socks, boots and cloth for uniform used to be imported from England. Kikar thorn was provided in packs from the stationary depot in place of common pin. Paper, pencils and every item of stationary had to be imported from abroad.

Indo-Pak war of 1948 in Kashmir was fought under these conditions. The present day Azad Kashmir was due to the sacrifices of those unknown heroes who had to carry on the fight under most difficult conditions. When the ceasefire was ordered in 1948 they were thoroughly disappointed. For, they were convinced that had they been allowed to continue to fight they would have captured Srinagar within a few months.

The old theory that it is the man behind the gun and not the gun that matters literally proved true in the Indo-Pak war of 1948 fought on the soil of Kashmir. After a few years, the conditions had slightly improved, in that, indigenous industry was installed

to meet our partial requirement of arms and equipment. Towards the end of nineteen fifties, under mutual agreements and pacts, American Aid started pouring in, which provided free arms, heavy weapons and equipments to all the three services; Army, Navy and Air Force.

By 1965, Pakistan Armed Forces had become a hard hitting force capable of destroying any army twice its size at any place and at any time. Regimental life for the first ten years or so was still preferred over staff appointments. In all other aspects it remained more or less the same as it is today. I personally found it fascinating. We all lived like family members and the relationships developed during that period continue till today. Most of officers were dedicated soldiers. They served in the Army more for honour than for monetary benefits. With the passage of time, gradually standard of integrity, honesty and moral values degenerated.

Please tell us something about the standard of training in the Army in the period 1947-58 and 1958-65 i.e. how would you compare both the periods in terms of improvement or decline, standards set or achieved and level of professionalism?

From 1947 up till 1958, Pakistan Army was a small Army but highly competent and dedicated to the profession. We had very simple living but took pride in the profession and being men in uniform. Therefore, all its efforts were concentrated on professional training and loyalty to the Constitutional Government. However, after the proclamation of Martial Law in 1958, its priorities changed. Martial law changes the very outlook of a soldier towards his profession or his duty to the state. Loyalty to Ayub Khan and the ruling junta was given the top priority whereas training in the Army and its obligation to the State were relegated to the second position. Our senior officers started indulging in accumulation of wealth and building palatial houses. The higher leadership was mostly incompetent.

Thus the seed for the disintegration of Pakistan was sown. And after about ten years or so it resulted in the break-up of Pakistan in the 1971 war. Had we not lived under martial law from 1958 onwards and remained a professional army, as in the past, I have no doubt that we would have decisively defeated the Indian Army both in 1965 and 71 wars.

Please tell us about the political perceptions that you formed in the Pakistan of 1947-58?

In 1948, my unit 3rd Baluch was in East Pakistan. Then Major General Ayub Khan was the local Log Area Commander. Another unit of that formation was a battalion of the Frontier Force Regiment, perhaps the 8th FF Regiment. That was the total force under the Command of General Ayub. He very frequently used to visit the combined Unit Officers Mess and informally spend the evenings with the officers like our Commanding Officer. One day during informal conversation he said, “Before partition anyone who had a bit of brain preferred to join the services. They either got commission in the Army or joined Class One Civil Services. Only junk was left behind.

When partition came, Quaid-i-Azam couldn’t find better people and he had to pick up political leaders from amongst the available junk and dished out high appointments to anyone who came in the way.” That showed General Ayub’s contempt for the politicians even at that time. And to some extent this impression had its effect on other officers also. I, as a young officer at that time, also thought that perhaps he was right but with the passage of time I realised that even if he felt that way it was not proper for him to say so in the presence of junior officers. For, it amounts to spreading hatred against the constitutional government. And, Pakistan then being a new state could not afford such criticism to prevail.

In fact, one of the main reason why democracy could not take roots in Pakistan was that the Army had started indulging in Politics in the very early stages of its creation. The first Martial Law was proclaimed at Lahore in 1953. And the first constitutional government of Khawaja Nazim ud Din was dismissed by Governor General Ghulam Mohammad in 1954 with the connivance of General Ayub Khan, then C-in-C Pakistan Army.

On the other hand in India, General Cariappa, the first C-in-C Indian Army, when on completion of 3 years term, was offered an extension refused to accept such an offer, saying, “If the Indian Army cannot produce a Commander-in-Chief to replace me, it is not worth its salt”. Consequently, India remained safe from Martial Laws.

It is worth mentioning here that Mr Winston Churchill, British wartime Prime Minister who apart from being a great statesman and a National Hero was also a great intellectual and a great historian, had once said, “Democracy is not the best form of Government but no better system has yet been evolved.”

Please tell us something about your experiences as a student at the Staff College Quetta, the standard of instruction, any instructor who particularly impressed you etc?

This course forms an essential part of an army officer’s career. The standard of training at Staff College, Quetta compares favourably with any other Staff College in the world. It has a very fine library and instructions imparted are of a very high standard. The course I attended had about 20 foreign students and about 60 Pakistanis. It no doubt serves as a foundation for further promotion to higher command. I have nothing more to add.

Please tell us about your service profile from 1958-65?

After completion of my staff course in 1956, I was posted as GSO-2 to the Commandant where I stayed up till the end of 1958. In early 1959, I was sent to the United States for a course at the Infantry School Fort Benning. In July 1959, I returned from United States and was posted as company commander to my unit 3rd Baluch. In Oct 1960, I was posted as Brigade Major 104 Brigade at Sialkot.

In Jan 1963, I was selected for Turkish language Course and after undergoing preliminary training for about 4 months at Karachi I was sent to Turkey for advanced Language training where I stayed till the end of 1963. In early 1964 I was posted as 2nd in Command 21 Baluch where I stayed for nearly a year and a half and was then posted as CO 3rd Baluch in July 1965.

How was the experience in Turkey?

I went to Turkey, for the first time, in 1963 to attend the Turkish language course wherein I got First Class Interpretership. In October 1966 I was posted as Military Attache and stayed there for three years. Since I knew the language very well, it became easy for me to study their history and the reasons for the rise and fall of Turkish Empire. It was a fascinating study for me. For, since its foundation in 1288, the Turkish rulers had carried the banner of Islam for more than seven hundred years. Instead of fighting against the Muslim rulers in the East, they had expanded their empire towards Europe in the West and Russia in the North.

By the end of 17th Century almost the whole of Eastern Europe, major portion of southern Russia and entire middle-eastern Muslim countries formed part of the Ottoman Empire which continued to remain under their influence upto the beginning of First World War in 1914. During the First World War the Arabs had betrayed the Turks and Istanbul was occupied by the Allied Armies. Consequently, the Turks developed a hatred towards the Arabs. After 1918, the Turks carried out War of Independence under the leadership of Attaturk Mustafa Kamal Pasha and established present day Turkey as an independent state.

Though as a Nation, they carried out the War of Independence as a Jihad against the Christians, yet Mustafa Kamal and his close associates harboured hatred against the Arabs. By 1928, in the name of reforms he tried to obliterate the influence of Islam from the Turkish State and changed the written Arabic script into Latin and compelled everyone to put on European dress. Even Azzan in Arabic was banned and translated into Turkish.

The Army became the custodians of the reforms and that conflict still continues. A vast majority of Turks are dedicated Muslims and have very good feelings towards Pakistan. In 1965 war, the Prime Minister of Turkey had ordered all the resources of Turkish Armed Forces be placed at the disposal of Pakistan and anything they need must be immediately provided. Since both the armies were equipped with American equipment, planeloads of ammunition and equipment were sent to Pakistan to meet our requirement.

Throughout my stay in Turkey, I felt as if I was at home. I with my family travelled throughout the country, and at no stage I ever felt that I was in a foreign land.

Please tell us something about your experiences as CO 3rd Baluch in 1965?

On 17 July 1965, I took over the command of 3rd Baluch, the Battalion I had joined as a second lieutenant after repatriation from India where I was serving in the Rajput regiment since my commissioning on 16th February 1947. Immediately after assumption of command I started intensive training. In about a month and a half the battalion was fully trained for war. Chamb operation had started on the 1st of September 1965 but the troops at Lahore were carrying out normal peacetime training till 4th of September.

On 4th of September, I held my battalion ceremonial parade and in the afternoon there was a basketball competition. On 5th morning a TEWT (tactical exercise without troops) was to be held and instead of going to the exercise we were suddenly called to the Brigade Headquarters and ordered to move to our allotted defensive positions astride GT road on Wagha Sector.

We were specifically ordered not to leave the unit lines before midnight 5/6 September. From my unit lines to Batapur bridge was about 14 miles, which my Battalion had to cover on foot. At about 6 o' clock on 6th September, my companies had reached their allocated position extended over a distance of about 5 miles astride the GT Road. My right forward company had just reached its position on both sides of the BRBL canal when the Indian Army attack started. I had hardly taken off my pack when I received a message from the Brigade Major 114 Brigade that India had attacked Pakistan and captured Wagha and Gawindi post on Burki Sector and was advancing towards Lahore.

It was my first experience of war and it is a fact that I felt highly thrilled. A little later, about half a dozen Indian planes flew past towards Lahore. The Indians had started their advance with 15th Indian Division consisting of 4 brigades on Wagha Sector and 7th Division less one Brigade on Burki Sector. Obviously Wagha sector was comparatively more important from the Indian point of view because the Grand Trunk passes through it and after reaching Shalimar gardens they could get on Mahmood Booti Road and capture Ravi bridge without going through the built up area of Lahore City. This would have sealed off Army reinforcements to the beleaguered troops in Lahore Cantonment who were, in any case, not yet ready to go into battle.

Most of the divisional artillery units and 22 Brigade, which was in reserve, were doing their normal PT parade on the morning of 6th September when the leading Indian troops had started their attack on our positions on BRBL canal. A major portion of Lahore garrison officers heard the news about the Indian attack when they were having their breakfast in the messes or in their houses. This was the state of preparedness of 10th Division, who were responsible for the defence of Lahore, on the morning of 6th September, I called up my depth companies to fill up the gaps in the defensive area.

We fought that battle without trenches, without defensive minefield and without barbed wire in the defensive positions when the Battalion was pitched against a division of 4 brigades. If I go into the details of the narrative of the battle of 6th September, it would become very lengthy. The area between the BRBL canal upto Ravi bridge was all empty. The two leading enemy tanks were destroyed by one of our anti-tank guns firing from behind a bullock cart. Both sides were surprised in this battle. We were not expecting enemy attack because we were moved only as a precautionary measure with only the pouch ammunition and not allowed to even dig our trenches till the time the positions were visited by the Brigade Commander or the GOC.

The Indians were surprised to find the BRBL occupied by Pakistani troops who had started firing on the Indian advancing troops. They were expecting that the canal would be empty, whereas on reaching there they were confronted by every type of fire. In those days, our defensive battle concept was in three layers; the first layer, the second layer and the resistance zone each 2000 yards apart. They perhaps thought that they had reached the first layer positions and they had yet to face the second layer and resistance zone.

Instead of pressing their attack to capture the bridges across the canal they decided to halt the advance with sporadic firing and carry out proper canal crossing operation at night. By the evening we had considerably strengthened our positions and were ready to face the challenge.

Till today I call it a miracle. For, had the Indians succeeded in capturing the Batapur Bridge that morning, Lahore would have fallen latest by 11 o'clock that morning and General Chaudry, the then C-in-C Indian Army would have celebrated their victory in Gymkhana Club over a peg of whisky, as promised to his officers, on the eve of the battle.

The narrative of the battle for the next seventeen days is a long story. By 10th September, we were ready to resume the advance

on the Indian soil, but because of the incompetence and cowardice of the higher command we could not do so and when the war ended the Indians were in occupation of about 240 square miles of our territory beyond the far bank of the BRBL canal.

Our armoured division offensive on Khem Karan sector had also got bogged down. Indian war correspondent Kuldip Nayar in his book “India’s Critical years” has described a very interesting account of Indo-Pak battle in Lahore-Khem Karan sector wherein he states that when our Armoured Division offensive started in Khem Karan sector, the Indian C-in-C General Chaudry ordered General Harbash Singh, Commander Western Command to withdraw his troops behind Bias river. General Harbash Singh refused to comply with the order saying he would not withdraw his troops but would instead fight the battle from his existing defensive positions. General Chaudry retorted, “You do not know the capabilities of Armour” implying that he could not comprehend the power of an Armoured Division. The Sikh General replied saying that “In war it is the courage that matters and not the technical knowledge”. By doing so, the Sikh General saved India.

Had our attack succeeded, the Indian Army would have suffered the same defeat as Arab Army had suffered at the hands of Israelis in 1967 war. Here again our higher leadership failed to carry the battle to a successful conclusion. After the end of the war, in order to hide their weaknesses and the public criticism, instructions were issued by the General Headquarters to destroy the war diaries so that, at some later stage, if any commission of inquiry was appointed to examine the conduct of war, no record of their incompetency could be produced as evidence.

You have asserted in your book that many gallantry awards were awarded in 1965 on the basis of citations and personal reasons rather than on actual ground realities. What is the basis of this viewpoint?

My personal experience of both the Indo-Pak wars of 1965 and 1971, has convinced me that it is very difficult to draw a distinction between the fighting capabilities of individuals while engaged in a collective action by giving awards to some and leaving others who had done equally well. In fact this creates more discontentment than fostering harmony amongst comrades in arms.

For example, award of Nishan-i-Haider to Aziz Bhatti on Burki Sector was based on a completely fictitious citation.

And I can say with confidence that at least eighty percent of the awards in both the wars were completely bogus. In 1971 war I had commanded 205 Brigade in Hilli Bogra Sector. Major Akram, Nishan-i-Haider was in my brigade. That brigade received more than 50 SJs & TJs, the highest number of awards in that war.

No one knows better than I do, that those awards were just dished out at random only because I was continuously being pressed from Eastern Command to send the list of gallantry awards. For, my brigade was the only brigade which continued to hold its position to the last days before the ceasefire and when the war ended the fighting was still going on in the streets of Bogra and I had refused to surrender.

Please tell us something about your service profile from 1965 to 1971?

After 1965 war, I was selected for posting abroad as a Military Attache in Turkey where I stayed from Oct 1966 to Oct 1969.

In November 1969 I returned to Pakistan and took over the Command of 54 Brigade at Sialkot. I remained in Command of 54 Brigade for about 2 years and in October 1971, I was posted to General Headquarters as Director of Staff Duties. In November 1971, I volunteered for service in East Pakistan and was posted to East Pakistan as Commander 205 Brigade at Bogra.

How was the standard of training in the Army in the period 1965-71? Was there any improvement as compared to the pre-1965 period.

I cannot comment much upon it for the period 1966-69 because in that period I was away in Turkey but on return to Pakistan in October 1969 and assumption of Command of 54 Brigade, I put the entire Brigade through tests as laid down in training

Directive by GHQ and on completion of the tests I sent a report to the GOC 15 Division saying, “The entire Brigade units are unfit for war”.

The then GOC, General Abdul Hameed, called me in his office and said, “I have seen your report. My Division is as well or as badly trained as any other Division of the Pakistan Army”. Instead of appreciating it, he appeared to be a little sarcastic. I told him that I meant no aspersions on his Command and that I had sent him the report so that he should know the correct position about the operational fitness of my Brigade. Anyway that did not bother me and I started the training as I wanted to. It had been my practice throughout my career that I always did what I thought was right irrespective of the fact whether it was liked or disliked by my superiors. I was quite used to such rebuffs.

I have always maintained that only those officers who have learnt to command with confidence and obey with self-respect can bear the heavy strains of war.

You volunteered for service in the East Pakistan when many people already thought that it had been lost. What were your reasons for doing so?

In Oct / Nov 1971, I was holding the appointment of Director Staff Duties at GS Branch, General Headquarters. I used to see reports of at least 30 to 40 own troops being killed everyday. One got the impression that if that state of affairs continued, East Pakistan would slip into Indian hands.

I am a devoted Muslim and I became very emotional. I sent a personal letter to Brigadier Baqar Saddiqi, Chief of Staff Eastern Command, who was an old friend, saying we would not let East Pakistan become Spain in the History of Islam. In those days, officers posted to East Pakistan often used to remain on “Sick Report” or got themselves admitted in Hospitals. The MS had to issue a letter throughout the Army saying that in future posting to East Pakistan would not be cancelled on the grounds of admission in hospitals. The officer would have to move to East Pakistan even on stretcher and if it was a genuine case he would be admitted in hospital in Dacca.

Rear Admiral Sharif who General Tajammul Noted got an HJ for killing his countrymen

Major Genera Rahim who General Tajammul Noted got an HJ for killing his cour trymen

A.A.K Niazi

A.H Amin Collection

**Ranker Generals Plan
A failed campaign**



Regardless of the prevailing situation I asked for interview with General Hameed, then Chief of the Army Staff and requested him for posting to East Pakistan for command of a Brigade. He highly appreciated my volunteering for service in East Pakistan

and in a few hours my posting order was issued by the Military Secretary to take over the command of 205 Brigade at Bogra.

Please tell us something about your experiences as a brigade commander in the East Pakistan in 1971?

The battle of Hilli Bogra sector in 1971 war can rightfully be regarded as a classic example of defence in the history of warfare. Against my one brigade, Indians had deployed four infantry brigades i.e 202 Brigade, 66 Brigade, 165 Brigade and 340 Brigade, one armoured bridge i.e 3 Armoured Brigade, 471 Engineer Brigade and two artillery brigades augmented by 33 Corps Artillery, yet when the war ended on 16th September, the battle was still going on in the streets of Bogra. The Indians could not succeed in breaking through that sector till the very end.

If I go into the details of the battle, it would become very lengthy. The Indian General, Major General Lachman Singh in his book, “The Indian Sword Strikes in East Pakistan” described this battle in detail. He has devoted at least two chapters on it. After the war the Indians had sent a team of experts to study the battle on the ground and determine reasons why such a heavy force as described above could not break through that sector till the end.

You have stated in your book that atrocities were committed by many units / individuals in East Pakistan. You have also stated that you tried to curb these. What was the extent / magnitude of the alleged atrocities vis-a-vis alleged atrocities committed by the Mukti Bahini.

I took over the command of 205 Brigade on 17th of November 1971 and about 4 days later the Indians had started the attack on our positions. During the period of my command, on one occasion, it was reported to me that one of my units 8 Baluch had captured about 8 civilians. The brigade headquarter was informed for their disposal. I was told that as a routine all such persons who were captured were to be shot without any investigation. I passed orders that in future no such shooting would take place unless I had seen them myself. When I visited the unit, they produced them before me. As I was meeting them, one of

them fainted. The CO of that unit said, he is malingering. On further inquiry I found out that they were not in fact ‘muktis’ but were the local people working in the fields, grazing cattle. I ordered that they be released.

I learnt through many other officers that during the earlier operations against the Mukti Bahinis thousands of innocent people were killed.

In one of my defensive position at Santahar, large number of people were massacred. General Tikka Khan & Lieutenant General Jahanzeb Arbab had earned their reputation of being Butchers of East Pakistan. So were many other Brigadiers and Generals. Mukti Bahinis too, may also have done so in retaliation but it was very negligible as compared to the atrocities committed by the West Pakistani troops against the East Pakistanis.

Despite the fact what we had done to them, I personally found the local people very sympathetic towards us. In fact after the war, when I was moving from Bogra to Naogaon to link up with 13 FF of my brigade, I and a team of another officer with 17 other ranks were captured by Mukti Bahinis and the locals who not only saved our life but put bandages on the wounds I had sustained during the process of my capture.

How would you sum up the root cause of the failure in East Pakistan from the pure military point of view?

We had enough resources in way of equipment and manpower to continue the war at least for six months. There was absolutely no justification for surrender. It was, perhaps, the guilt conscious weighing heavy on the minds of the Commanders, who had committed atrocities during the cleaning up operations. Had General Niazi and his team of Generals and Brigadiers decided to stand and fight, the Indian Army would never have succeeded in reaching even the fringes of Dacca. Even in the Hamood ur Rahman Commission it has been brought out that there was no justification for surrender. I do not consider it necessary to go into further details. For, it will become very lengthy.

We understand that you refused to surrender in East Pakistan. Please tell in detail what you felt about the whole issue.

Hilli Bogra sector was the only sector where Indians used an Armoured Brigade. For, in December the terrain represented the plains of Punjab. As I said before in this sector the Indians used 4 Infantry Brigade, one Armoured Brigade, one Engineer Brigade, one Mukti Brigade and yet could not break through this sector to the end and when the war ended the fighting was still going on in the streets of Bogra.



Major General M.H Ansari ,GOC 9 Divisions surrenders on 16 December 1971 after a most unspectacular divisional battle in which his two brigade commanders Just fled the battle field leaving a big gap in the middle



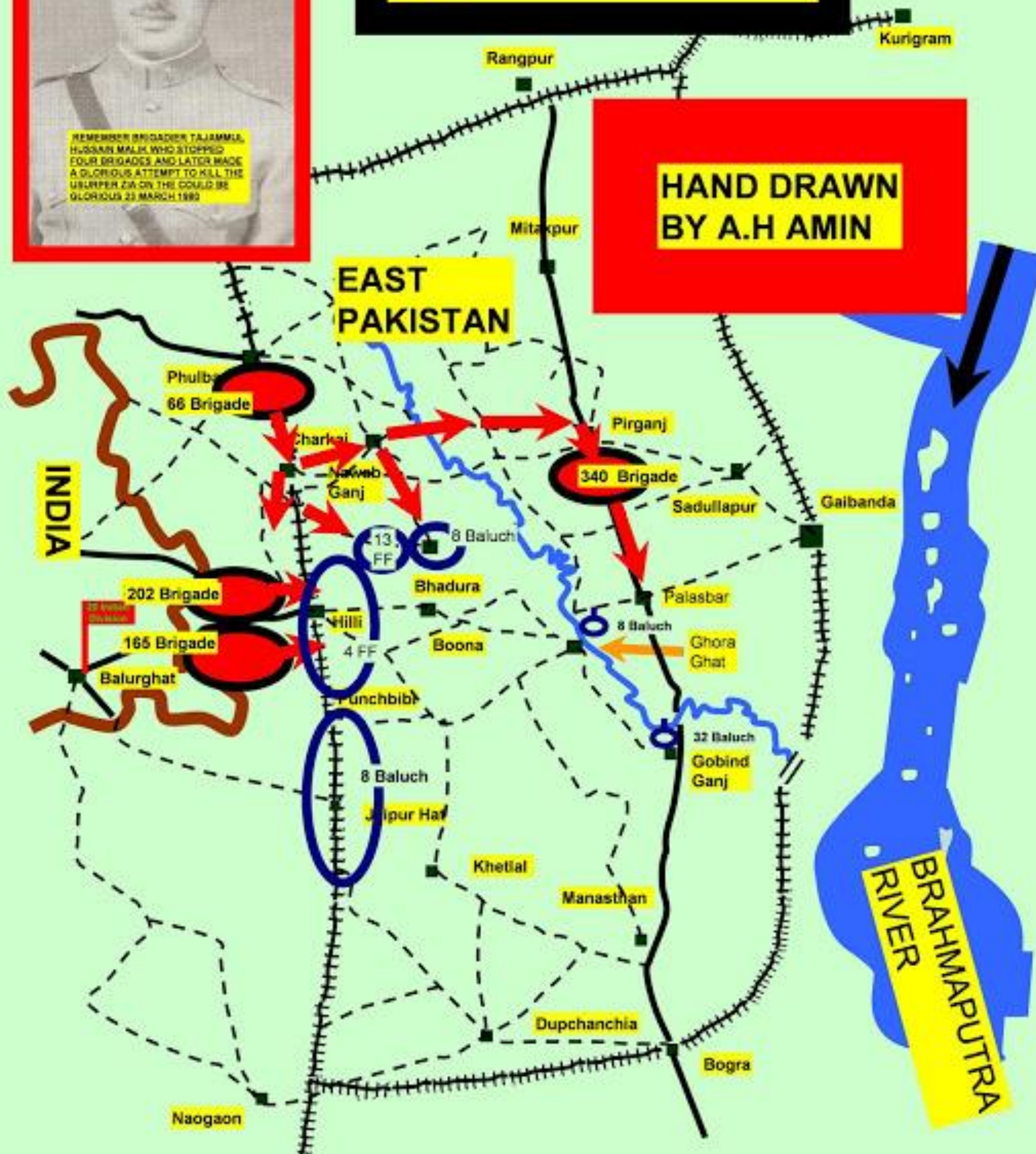
The Battle of Hilli Bogra received the maximum publicity through the world media. I was mentally attuned to resist the Indians in the same manner as I had done on Wagha Sector in 1965 War. I could not conceive of surrender. On 15th and 16th December, when Bogra was surrounded from all sides, I was moving about in the battle area in my jeep, with the flag and stars uncovered, and announcing on the loud speaker, “We shall fight from the rooftops, the windows and in the streets but we shall not surrender.”



REMEMBER BRIGADIER TAJAMMUL
HUSSAIN MALIK WHO STOPPED
FOUR BRIGADES AND LATER MADE
A GLORIOUS ATTEMPT TO KILL THE
USURPER ZIA ON THE COULD BE
GLORIOUS 23 MARCH 1983

BATTLE OF HILLI-BOGRA 1971

HAND DRAWN
BY A.H AMIN



SPECIAL NOTE FOR THE READER

FROM MAJOR A.H AMIN

(RETIRED)

**The reader should not form
fallacious conclusions here and also
compare the above battle with
another battle below in 1971 where
Indian Armys three battalions**

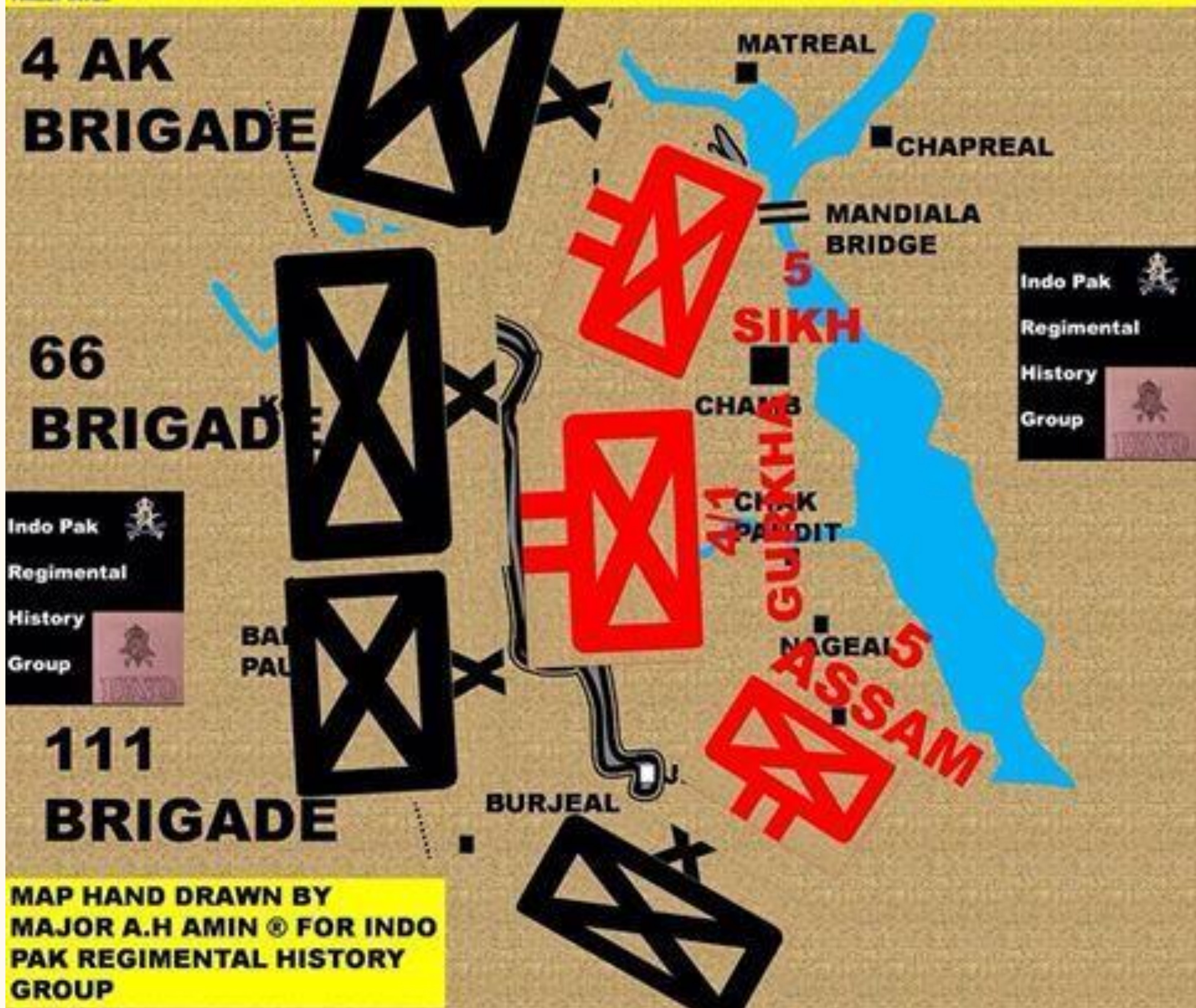
repulsed and held four Pakistani

infantry brigades :--

THE POWER OF DEFENCE IN WAR

ALTHOUGH 66 BRIGADE FORMED A LODGEMENT OF 3000 YARDS THE INDIAN 191 BRIGADE FRONT REMAINED INTACT

THREE BATTALIONS STOP FOUR INFANTRY BRIGADES- PAKISTANS 111 BRIGADE INFAMOUS IN REMOVING MICKEY MOUSE CIVILIAN GOVERNMENTS WAS TOTAL FAILURE ONLY LATER IN THE BREAKTHROUGH IN CHAMB- SIMILAR LAURELS WERE ACHIEVED BY 66 BRIGADE AND 20 BRIGADE-THE INDIANS LOST CHAMB ONLY BECAUSE OF THEIR OWN INEFFICIENCY IN NOT HAVING THE MINEFIELD BETWEEN JHANDA AND BARSALA BECAUSE OF INDIAN GHQs FAILURE IN NOT PASSING TIMELY INTEL



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The power of defence in war

. January 1999

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I was inspiring them with the Quranic Ayat that a Muslim soldier does not surrender on the battlefield. Anyone who turns his back will go to hell. I could see that almost everyone whom I addressed was prepared to die. They responded to my speech with slogans of Allah Ho Akbar. It was most thrilling scene.

These words, which I have uttered, were later confirmed in the Indian Books published after the war. Some of the excerpts I would like to quote here. General Palit, in his book, “The Lightning Campaign” had said, “In Hilli Bogra sector the Pakistani troops fought for every inch of ground.”

Dr Monkakar in his book “Pakistan cut to size” had said, “the Battle of Hilli was the toughest battle of Indo-Pak War”, General Aurora, GOC-in-C Indian Eastern Command, in his interview with the Illustrated Weekly of India, published in 1973 had said, “The battle of Bhaduria (which was fought within Hilli Bogra sector) was the bloodiest battle fought in East Pakistan”.

General Lachman Singh in his Book, “The Indian sword strikes in East Pakistan” described the battle in this sector in great detail. He was a brave general, who had the courage to praise his opponents. He admired my fighting capabilities and went to the extent of saying, “Most of the senior officers preferred to surrender as soon as a threat developed to their Headquarters or their lives. Brigadier Tajammal was the only exception in my sector. He showed fanatical will to fight even at the cost of his life. I was happy to take him prisoner. I was glad to learn that he was the first senior officer to be promoted by the Pakistanis out of those who had surrendered in Bangladesh.”

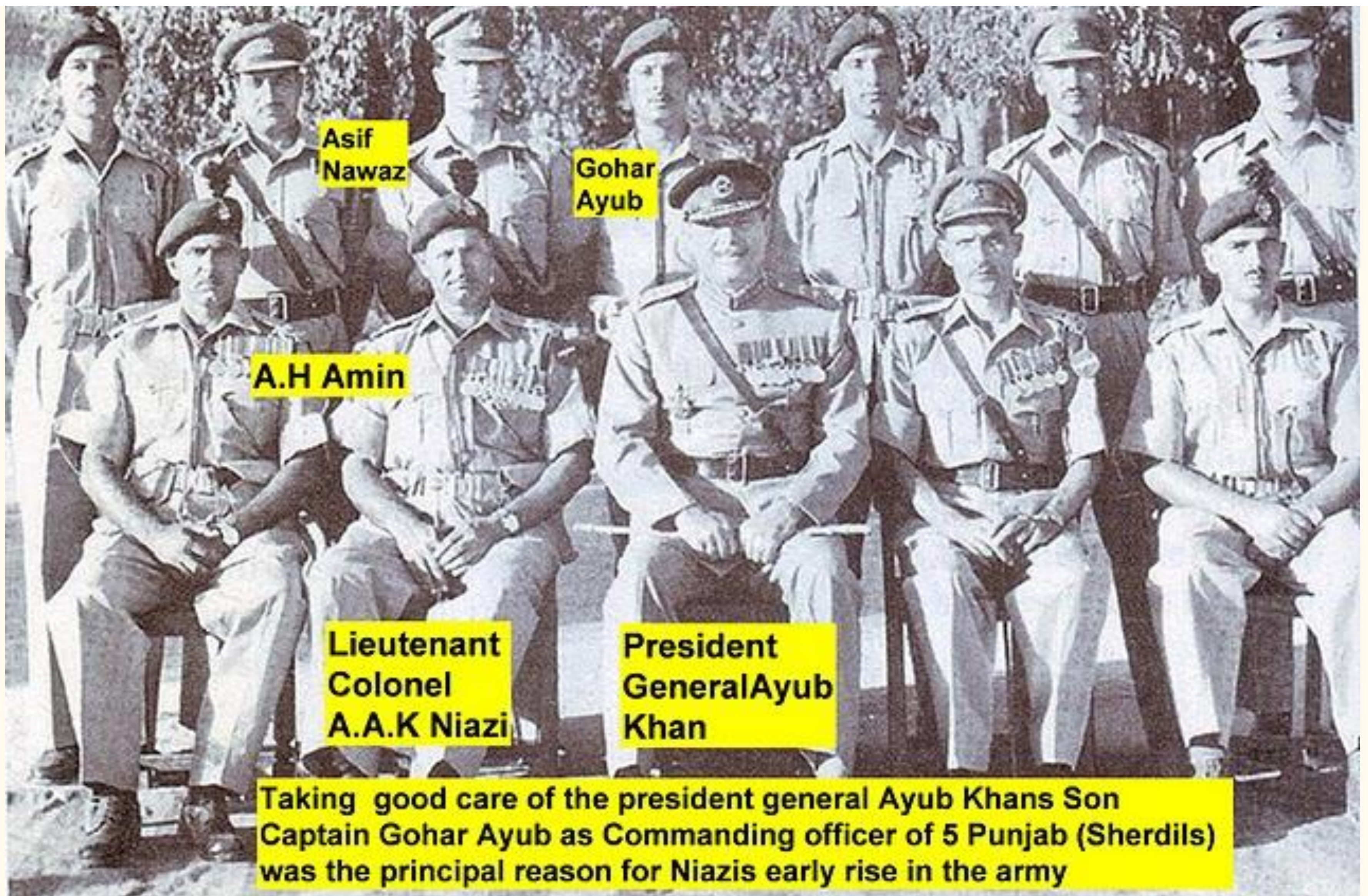
He almost wrote my ACR, wherein he said, “when in all other sectors, Pakistani troops were laying down arms, a group of officers and JCOs came to him and advised him to surrender. He refused to do so. He was no doubt a very brave and capable commander. He was in fact, prepared to die rather than surrender on the battlefield. His troops followed his example and resisted till the end.”

In fact he said much more than what I have said. I have only given a brief gist of it. Imbued with such a spirit how could I possibly think of surrender. The examples of Muslim commanders in the history of Islam who had fought against overwhelming Christian armies were ringing in my ears. At that critical moment those examples became a source of strength for me to continue to fight till the end.

Was the failure in East Pakistan related to Niazi’s incompetence or also to the Pakistani GHQ’s poor initial planning and assessments which dated to the period before the 1971 war broke out?

General Niazi had a brave record of service. In the past, whether during the Second World War as a company commander or in the 1965 War as a Brigade Commander, he had fought for mundane gains as a mercenary soldier.

He is not the type who was guided by spiritual or moral convictions. In East Pakistan had he decided to stand and fight, he would have created example of bravery and dedication to the cause of Islam surpassing many Muslim commanders of the past.



He would have been compared favourably with Musa Bin Ghasam who had refused to surrender in the last Battle of Granada (Spain), wherein at the time King Abdullah and his cabinet were laying down arms against the enemy forces of King Fernandez and Queen Isabella, he mounted his horse, drew his sword and broke through the enemy lines who had surrounded the palace. In this process he was so heavily wounded that his dead body was found on the riverbank about 20 miles away.

I do not entirely blame him. Most of the senior Brigadiers and General Officers at that time were brought up in mercenary traditions and they were fighting for mundane gains. At the time when final surrender took place on 16th December, there were about 4 other Generals, one Admiral and about 30 Brigadiers. They could have forced him not to surrender, had anyone of them had the courage to do so.

In all armies of the world, it is the inherent right of a soldier to refuse to lay down arms on the battlefield. Field Marshal Manstein in his book, “The Lost Victories” had said “No General can vindicate his loss of a battle by claiming that he was compelled against his better judgement to execute an order that led to defeat. In this case the only course open to him is that of disobedience for which he is answerable with his head. Success will usually decide whether he was right or not.”

Any Pakistani field commander who impressed you in the 1971 War?

To be frank, none, both in East and West Pakistan. I have the greatest regards and respect for some of the soldiers in the lower ranks who refused to surrender at the risk of their lives. The two examples I have quoted in my book, “The Story of My Struggle” that of Naik Sarwar Shaheed and Havildar Hukumdad who fought till the end and when their ammunition was exhausted they were called upon by the enemy to lay down arms but they refused to do so. Naik Sarwar Shaheed died on the last day of the Battle, when I had ordered my Brigade to break out to Naogong in small groups.

The Indians had given him a ceremonial burial as a mark of respect for his bravery. Naik Humkumdad had become Shaheed on the 13th or 14th of December when about 80 men of his company had already become shaheed and his own company commander, Maj Sajid, been taken prisoner by the enemy. The Indian Major putting pistol on the chest of Maj Sajid ordered him to tell Hukumdad to stop firing. Complying with the orders of the Indian officer, Maj Sajid told Hukumdad to stop firing. In reply Hukumdad said, “Sahib, Apna ammunition mukai bathi ho, meray pass abhi doo magazine baki hein” (You have apparently exhausted your ammunition, I am still left with two magazines full of ammunition.)

Brigadier Sadiq Salik in his book, “Witness to Surrender” has described this action in detail. I cannot think of any such example from amongst the senior officers, both in East and West Pakistan, who risked their life to such an extent. For, after the fall of Dacca, our Senior Commanders in West Pakistan had the option to continue the war had they so desired. In the past in all our operational planning for the defence of East Pakistan, we had been saying, “If Indians Capture Dacca we will capture Delhi and that the defence of East Pakistan lies in West Pakistan.” When the time came and East Pakistan was occupied by the Indian troops, Pakistan Army in West Pakistan could not capture even Amritsar or Jammu. In fact they very eagerly accepted the

Indian offer of ceasefire. At that critical moment, none of them had the courage to stand up and say, “No we will not accept ceasefire. We will fight till such time we capture a big chunk of Indian territory, at least, the size of East Pakistan” Had they done so there would have been no need for our 96,000 prisoners of war to remain in Indian camps for about 2 1/2 years.

How was the PW experience in India?

For an honourable soldier, becoming a prisoner of war is most humiliating. After the war when we were being gathered in a camp at Bogra, I had the opportunity to address my officers. I said to them, “Sometimes a tiger can also be trapped in a cage. Now that, unfortunately, you have become prisoners of war you should behave like a tiger in the cage.”

There must be many officers who though have retired from service can bear testimony to my last address to them uttering these words. At one occasion when we were being brought to the Prisoner of War Camp at Barelli, and we were passing through the Bazars of Barelli city, which was predominantly a Muslim town, I could see from their faces that they were looking very morose. I, too, felt very humiliated on seeing such a scene. I said to myself that perhaps, it would have been better if all of us had died on the battlefield fighting the enemy rather than face such humiliation.

I am sure many other junior officers and other ranks must have felt the same way but I could not see such impressions on the faces of senior officers of my own rank.

Please tell us something about your service profile from repatriation till retirement in 1975-76?

We returned from the Indian prison of war camp in April 1974. All POWs had to be thoroughly screened before sending them back to their units. A committee of Inquiry headed by Lieutenant General Aftab had already been formed to examine each case. We were told to submit reports on our experiences during the war and for the period we stayed as prisoners of war.

I gave a very candid report guided purely by the dictates of my own conscience. As a result of the finding of the committee of inquiry, a considerable number of officers of rank of Generals, Brigadiers, Colonels and below were retired / dismissed from service. All those who were cleared by committee of inquiry as fit for retention in service were posted to various units / formations at different stations. I took over the Command of 22 Brigade at Lahore in June 1974.

A few months later, a special selection board for promotion was held at GHQ and I was lucky enough to be the only one out of 32 Brigadiers from the entire Eastern Command, who was approved for promotion to the rank of Major General. On 25th November 1974, I assumed the Command of 23 Division at Jhelum.

What actually happened when you were GOC 23 Division and allegedly made a draft plan to overthrow Mr Bhutto's Government?

When General Zia ul Haq's name was announced as the new Chief of Army Staff towards the end of February 1976, it came as a very big surprise throughout the country. He was the junior most Corps Commander and had not shown any extraordinary brilliance either in peace or in war. In fact, his past was quite obscure and not many people in the Army had known him.

On the other hand most of others who had been superseded such as Late Lieutenant General Akbar Khan, Lieutenant General Azmat Baksh Awan, Lieutenant General A.I. Akram, Lieutenant General Aftab Ahmad Khan and Lieutenant General Abdul Majid Malik all had distinguished service.

Even Lieutenant General Mohammad Sharif, though promoted to the rank of a General and made Chief of Joint Staff was in a way superseded because that post carried almost the same constitutional powers as late Chaudry Fazal Elahi had as President during Mr Bhutto's regime, perhaps, even less than that because Chaudry Fazal Elahi was at least the constitutional head whereas Chief of the Joint Staff was not even the Constitutional head of the Armed Forces.

The three Services Chiefs came directly under the Minister of Defence who was the Prime Minister himself. General Zia had hardly been in command of the Army for about a month when on 24th March 1976 he suddenly appointed a team of five new

Corps Commanders and their names were announced on the radio.

On that evening, there was a social function in the garrison officer club. I came back to my residence at about 2200 hrs and after saying my prayers went to bed. An hour or so later, I received a telephone call. I picked up the phone and the Chief of Army Staff, General Zia ul Haq was on the line. He said, “Have you heard the news”. I said “No Sir”. He said, “You stand superseded”. I said, ‘Who has been promoted’. He named Iqbal, Sawar Khan, Chisti, Ghulam Hassan and Jahanzeb Arbab. I said, ‘I would like to have an interview with the Prime Minister’. He said, ‘You can do that’. If I correctly remember, he said that I would be required to come to Pindi on 30th of March to attend a conference and during that period I could also see the Prime Minister. That was the end of our conversation.

I must be frank in saying that I felt very upset about it. I had not expected that. I never claimed to be a genius nor had any misconception about myself but I knew the capabilities of my contemporaries, particularly those who had been promoted. After all we belonged to the same Army and I had by then put in about 30 years service. It is a long time to get to know each other very well.

The peculiarity about these promotions was that except for Jahanzeb Arbab, who had been superseded earlier because of having been found guilty of embezzlement of huge amount of money while in East Pakistan by a Court of Inquiry, headed by Major General M H Ansari but continued to remain in an officiating Command of a Division with the rank of a Brigadier for nearly two years upto as late as February 1976 when he was promoted to the rank of a Major General, all others were those who were on staff in GHQ.

Major General Iqbal was doing as Chief of General Staff, Major General Sawar Khan was Adjutant General, Major General Chisti was Military Secretary and Major General Ghulam Hassan was Director General Military Training. The Division Commanders that is to say myself, Major General Akhtar Abdur Rehman, Major General Fazal e Raziq, Major General Mateen, Major General Ch Abdur Rehman, Major General Jamal Said Mian, Major General Amir Hamza (DG Civil Armed Forces), Major General Wajahat Hussain (Commadant Staff College) were all superseded.

After the appointment of Chief of Army Staff, about a month earlier, this was the second big jolt in the Army. It is a part of my character that I do not accept defeat so easily particularly when I feel that I have a right cause. I had followed this practice

throughout my career. Therefore, on 25th March when I went to my office I started drafting my representation.

It is also true that it came to my mind that in case the Prime Minister did not do Justice I would use force to get Justice done. Somebody had to stand up and say, ‘Enough is Enough. Don’t make Pakistan Army a private Army. There ought to be some Justice’.

I was, perhaps, the only Division Commander who was in position to do that quite easily. Rawalpindi was only about 70 miles away and I could complete the entire operation of taking over the Government in a couple of hours on any night. I did not have to discuss the matter with anyone else.

My method of Command was such that whereas I allowed complete freedom to my subordinates to point out any weakness in my personal conduct both official and private, I knew that no one could question the authenticity of my orders if I had so decided. However, so far this idea was only in my mind and I had not taken any practical steps in that direction.

On 25th or 26th March, I called my Colonel Staff (retired as Major General) Mohammad Aslam Zuberi to my office. He had been a cadet in my platoon when I was a platoon commander in the Pakistan Military Academy in 1954/55.

He was in upper term when I took over the platoon. To me he appeared to be quite sensible and a good person. I thought he was being unduly victimised and that if properly guided he had the making of a good officer. In September or October 1955 he got his commission and I never met him, thereafter, till he was posted as my Colonel Staff in 1975.

I was very pleased to see him on that post. He used to say, “I tell others I owe my existence in the Army to General Tajammal, otherwise I would have been on the streets” which in fact to a large extent was true. It was primarily because of my support that he was given commission in the Army. Quite naturally I had complete confidence in him.

I started telling him that I had such a good record of service both in peace and war that it could never cross my mind that I would be superseded and that I intended to put up a representation to the Prime Minister. I also gave him an inkling of my intentions. I told him that I had dedicated my life for the cause of Islam and that I had no desire for the accumulation of wealth and property or even for higher promotion except with the ultimate aim of establishing a truly Islamic State on the pattern of

Khulfai Rashideen.

I think I gave him the example of China and said that if an athiestic state could create an almost classless society why could not a truly Islamic state provide, at least, same kind of socio-economic justice to its people if not better. As he was from the Corps of Signals, I asked him if he could provide me with the necessary information on the communication set up in the country.

I did not discuss any other details with him as to how and when I intended to carry out my plan. I could never imagine that my Colonel Staff would betray me. The same evening he went to Rawalpindi and reported to Corps Commander and then perhaps to Chief of Army Staff, General Zia ul Haq that I was planning to overthrow the Government.

The next morning I was informed that I was required to attend a conference at Corps Headquarters / General Headquarters on 28th March. Accordingly I went to Rawalpindi that morning and occupied a room reserved for me in Apprentice School at the Mall.

If I go into more details about what happened during the inquiry which lasted for five days, it would become very lengthy. The detailed account of that interview is given in my book, “The story of my struggle”.

In conclusion, I would say that on 3rd April 1976 I was told to come to Chief of Army Staff’s office. As I entered that office General Zia ul Haq, flanked by four Lieutenant Generals, Sawar Khan, Ghulam Hassan, Chisti and Ghulam Jilani donned in their ceremonial dresses were all sitting in a manner as if my trial was going to start. In their peculiar way they put to me almost the same questions, which had been put to me during the inquiry, and they got the same answers, which I had given them earlier.

What was the need for the big five to assemble in such a manner, I still do not understand. It was certainly not in keeping with normal procedure known in the Army. This drama lasted for a short time and then General Zia ul Haq said to me, “I have decided to retire you. The higher one goes the harder one falls. You are a fanatic.” Legally there was no justification to retire me from service.

During the inquiry, which I have already mentioned, nothing incriminating was found against me. However, after announcing

his decision about my retirement, General Zia said to me that I would be given about 5 days to bid farewell to the units and formations of my Division and that my retirement would become effective from 8th April 1976.

Immediately after my retirement orders were issued, a letter was sent by General Headquarter from the Chief of the Army staff to the Formation Commanders to be read out to the Garrison Army Officers at various stations throughout the country stating that General Tajammal had been retired from service because he was planning to overthrow the Government and create an Islamic State.

On 8th April my Divisional Officers arranged a farewell lunch for me at the Divisional Officers Mess. That was the last day I wore the uniform.

How is that many officers including you, Amir Hamza, Saadullah etc who were praised by Indian Military Commanders like Lachman Singh were not promoted to Lieutenant General rank in the Pakistan?

It is not proper for me to say so, but the fact remains that to the best of my knowledge the Indians have not praised any other senior Pakistani commander except myself in their books or otherwise in a manner as I have been. As regards my own promotion to the rank of Lieutenant General, it was mainly because General Zia ul Haq had seen my conduct during the Division Commanders conferences expressing my view very candidly. He, therefore, thought that he would not be able to control me. He selected a team of ‘yes men’ who were more docile and prepared to accept his command without any hesitation.

My record of service at that time showed that I was the only one in the Pakistan Army who had been graded “OUTSTANDING”, as a Brigadier, in his last Annual Confidential Report. My last ACR as a Division Commander was graded “Above Average” by the then Corps Commander Lieutenant General Aftab Ahmad Khan, whereas from amongst my contemporaries Lieutenant General Faiz Ali Chisti and Late General Akhtar Abdur Rehman were adjudged on the lower side of the “Average” grade.

What do you have to say about the assertion that sycophancy and timidity plays a major role in promotion to higher ranks in the Army?

To a certain extent promotion through sycophancy has been experienced in almost all armies of the world. That is why Field Marshal Rommel of the German Army had to say, “Those who do no more than supinely pass on the opinion of the seniors are placed on the top whereas many others with high merits are placed on the shelf”. In our Army, Field Marshal Ayub Khan since he became Commander-in-Chief in 1951, made sure that only those people were promoted to higher ranks, who proved their personal loyalty to him rather than loyalty to the state.

He did so because he had the ambitions of becoming the Head of State from the very beginning. As I said before, he had a contempt for the politicians and with the passage of time he went on getting extension of his tenure till he finally took over in Oct 1958.

From amongst the senior officers anyone who expressed his opinion against the Army indulging in politics was immediately retired. Some of the very capable generals who had passed out from Sandhurst were superseded when General Musa was appointed Commander-in-Chief. Now that he is dead, it is not proper for me to pass any remarks against him but I have no hesitation in saying that he was a typical Gorkha Soldier, who had learnt to obey the command of their superiors whether right or wrong. The junior officers following examples of the seniors, had also learnt that perhaps sycophancy, rather than professional capabilities, was the only criteria for attaining the higher command.

Exceptions are always there, but as a general practice many good officers who would have become very good Generals could not go beyond the rank of Lieutenant Colonel because they were intellectually and professionally far superior to their seniors and always expressed their views without any hesitation whenever and wherever required.

Commanders who attain the higher ranks through following the path of sycophancy soon crumble in the face of danger and cannot stand the test of battle fatigue. That has been an inherent weakness in our Army, which perhaps continues till today.

What were your impressions about Zia as you saw him in the Army tenure?

I had not intimately known him before he became the Chief of the Army Staff but from his conduct during the Divisional

Commanders Conferences, he appeared to me an incompetent and low grade officer.

In one of the Division Commanders promotion conferences, I even saw him sleeping with his mouth open.

He surpassed all limits of sycophancy when meeting the Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. While in uniform, he used to bow when shaking hands with Zulfikar Ali Bhutto.

I remember my old Brigade Commander, Brigadier Hayat, with whom I served as his Brigade Major, once told me that he had written in Major Zia ul Haq’s ACR when he served under his command, “Not fit to go beyond the rank of a Major”. It is an irony of fate that a person of such a calibre had ruled Pakistan for a long period of eleven years till he was finally killed in an air crash.

Please tell us something about your retired life from 1976 till you were arrested for conspiring to overthrow Zia’s Government?

At the time I was retired from service on 8th April 1976, I had not acquired even a residential plot to build my house. At the farewell lunch on that day addressing the divisional officers, I had said, “I made you work very hard during the period of my command but you all know that I underwent almost equal amount of hardship myself. As far as possible I always tried to practice what I preached. I did not recommend your applications for acquiring residential plots or getting loans for building houses. Now that I am retiring I can tell you that I have so far neither acquired a residential plot nor built a house to live in. I can also tell you that I will not seek a job and I have no doubt that my Creator would provide me with sustenance as He has done in the past. I then read a Quranic Ayat from Surah Hood for which translation is, ‘There is no moving creature on Earth but its sustenance dependth on God. He knowth the time and place of its definite abode and its temporary deposit. All is in a clear record.’ I can look into your eyes and say that I am leaving with a clear conscience, God be with you”. With these words I bade them goodbye and that was end of my army career and I started preparing for new struggle in life.

Sometimes it is easy to make such like emotional speeches but later on it becomes difficult to live upto it when confronted with the ground realities of life.

I had decided in my mind to adopt a political career. Being a devoted Muslim, I made my first contact with Maulana Madoudi who was a great Muslim Scholar and the founder of an Islamic religious movement. After frequent meetings with him when I had gained his confidence, I discussed my plans for an Islamic revolution with him. He assured me his full personal support. In Early 1977 General Elections were held and during that period I developed good working relationship with Air Marshal Asghar Khan and Maulana Mufti Mahmood who was then Chairman of the National Alliance Movement. In July 1977, when General Zia ul Haq proclaimed Martial Law, I tried to convince these top class political leaders not to co-operate with Zia Ul Haq, for, I

knew that he was a deceitful person. However, though outwardly some of them agreed with me yet inwardly they continued to establish contacts with Zia ul Haq for grabbing their share of power. In Oct 1979, when General Zia ul Haq postponed the elections for an indefinite period, I formed my own Islami Inqalab Party and issued a comprehensive manifesto for it. Formation of local government at District level, abolition of Commissionaires and Provinces was part of my manifesto.

What actually happened in 1980 as a result of which you were arrested along with many officers of 3rd Baluch including your son and nephews?

As I said before, soon after my retirement from service I started working for an Islamic Revolution. I tried to gain the support of major religious parties such as Jamaat-i- Islami, JUI, Khaksar movement and many other small religious groups. In March 1980, 3rd Baluch, the unit which I had joined as a second lieutenant and had the honour to command in 1965 war, was moved to Rawalpindi for 23rd March ceremonial parade. My son Naveed Tajammal was the Adjutant of the Battalion. My nephew Zafar Iqbal, who had been my ADC, was a company commander. My wife's nephew Mansoor Saeed, was Adjutant of 1st Punjab Regiment, the battalion employed for guarding the President House. I thought it was an opportune moment to organise a coup d'etat. Unfortunately, about 24 hours before the H-hour, one of the officers, Lieutenant Colonel Gillani, who formed part of the team leaked out the information to Lieutenant General Mujeeb ur Rahman, who was then Secretary Information and very close to Zia ul Haq. Consequently, on night 5/6 March 1980 I was arrested and confined at the State Guest House on Mall Road Rawalpindi under very heavy Army guard. If I go into details it would become very lengthy. I have explained this episode in detail in my book, "The Story of my Struggle".

What was the influence of Zia's one man rule on the Pakistan Army in the period 1977-88?

As I said earlier on, according to his record of service as a junior officer, he was not considered fit to go beyond the rank of a major. However, as the saying goes, when fortune begins to smile there is no end to it. He attained those heights, which perhaps he had never dreamt of. There is no doubt that he was highly deceitful and cunning. He exploited Islam to perpetuate his rule. He always selected team of generals who were very loyal to him. He succeeded in prolonging his rule for eleven years mainly because of Russo-Afghan war. The Western powers, especially United States, gave him everything that he wanted, in way of financial support and military equipment. The Army requirement was fully met. Quite naturally they remained contended. He used the Army to suppress the political opposition wherever it occurred. The senior commanders, who served under him, were intoxicated with power and were not bothered for restoration of democratic institutions. Consequently, in August 1988 when he died in Air Crash he took away a team of about 30 Brigadiers and Generals who were most loyal to him, along with him. And the country had to make a new start for restoration of democracy and fundamental rights.

During his eleven years rule his main concern was how to prolong the rule. Preparing the Army for war was of secondary importance to him. Most of the senior officers took advantage of his military rule and accumulated wealth and property as much as they possibly could. During his period of rule, corruption in the Army was at its peak. As a matter of fact it always happens when there is prolonged military rule.

In conclusion I would say that during General Zia ul Haq’s rule, the general opinion of the people was that Pakistan Army behaved more like an “Occupation Army” rather than a “National Army” which, perhaps, to a large extent was true.

Please tell us something about your life after release from prison in 1988.

Immediately after my release from prison in Oct 1988, I took part in the general elections then being held for a National Assembly seat from Chakwal District. Many political parties offered me a ticket, but I decided to go alone on the basis of my own manifesto for Tehrik-i- Inqalab-e-Islam. Though I could not win the elections, yet I left a very good impression on the minds of the people for a change in the existing colonial system. For a new idea, it always takes time to take roots and I thought I had succeeded in making my limited contribution for bringing about a change and abolishing the colonial heritage.

How would you compare the Pakistan Army of 1965 with that of 1971 and that of 2001?

The test of an Army is the battlefield. In 1965 war Pakistan Army, as a whole, did extremely well upto Lieutenant Colonel level. Most of the senior officers, in the higher command proved to be utter failure. I have always maintained that the Pakistan Army can defeat the Indian Army, twice its size, at any time and any place provided it is led by dedicated and professionally competent commanders. This factor was lacking during 1965 war. At that time we had achieved Air superiority, our tanks, artillery guns and other military equipment was far superior to that of the Indian Army. What we were lacking was good leadership at higher level. I am convinced that if we had taken bold action at Lahore and Khem Karan Sectors, we could have trapped entire western command in the same manner as the Israelis did to the Arabs in 1967 war. In 1971 war we had done badly both in East and West Pakistan. I have already described that despite adverse conditions in East Pakistan we could continue to fight for at least six months and in West Pakistan there was no justification for a ceasefire. The Indians captured Dacca but we could not take Delhi as we had been boasting before the war started. The standard of Army during 1965 war was much superior to that prevailed during 1971 war. For the past 30 years, Pakistan has not gone to war. I am, therefore, not in a position to comment on how they would fight if a war is thrust upon us.

What do you have to say about the theory that Pakistan should have a people’s army on the model of PLA of China.

I have always advocated that the entire nation should be armed and there should be regional territorial armies. But that is possible only, if our rulers come out of their palaces and start living in three bedroom houses and travel in small cars. There should be very little difference between rich and poor. Jagirdari system should be abolished and no single family be allowed to keep more than two or three squares of land. All the industry be nationalised and employees become the shareholders. There should be only one syllabus for education so that rich and poor have equal chances in the field of competition for all type of services. We should have a comparatively small army but highly proficient and hard hitting. They should be kept away from politics and concentrate on professional training. If Pakistani nation can be organised on these lines, I have no doubt that they can take Kashmir in a short span of

time and can occupy a very honourable position among the comity of nations. This is not an empty dream. It is possible to achieve if we can find dedicated higher leadership to do so.

What in your opinion damaged Pakistan the most in terms of political leadership in the entire history of Pakistan from 1947 to date?

From the very beginning, Pakistan was ruled by the landed aristocracy and rich business class. Consequently, though technically Pakistan had become independent, British colonial ruling system continued to prevail. The common man drew very little benefit from it. After eleven years of democratic experience, Army took over the control of running the country’s administration. It is a lesson of history that military rule does more harm than good to the country. It destroys all the progressive institutions and runs the country like a unit on yearly training programme basis. Had Field Marshal Ayub Khan not proclaimed Martial Law in 1958, perhaps with the passage of time, the political forces would have reconciled and both East and West Pakistan would have continued to exist as one country.

How would you describe your political life?

I have already described my political activities in detail since the day I retired from service on 8th April 1976. I still remain committed for an Islamic Revolution through constitutional process by moulding the public opinion. It is a slow process but I have no doubt that sooner or later Pakistani nation will realise that its salvation lies in following the path of democracy and implementation of Islamic values in every walk of life. God forbid, if at any stage anyone tried to make it a secular state, it would amount to disintegration of Pakistan.

What is the future of the religious parties in Pakistan?

I have very closely studied the working of almost all religious parties and in my view they are neither likely to unite nor produce any tangible results in winning elections. The main reason being that unlike Iran they remain divided for selfish reasons. However, there is a ray of hope if the existing political conditions prevail for the next 5 -10 years there is a possibility that a Taliban type movement based in Afghanistan may take over the government through force of arms. About 80% of the common people of this country will welcome such a move. For, they have yet not been able to free themselves from the shackles of slavery of landed aristocracy and the bureaucratic elite.

What is the likelihood of an extremist coup in Pakistan?

I do not visualise any military coup d’etat from any quarter of Armed forces. For, Pakistani nation is “fed up” of military rule, be it in benevolent form. In any case, military coup d’etat cannot carry out revolutionary changes because of its inherent weakness of not lowering their own standard of living to the level of a common man.

What is the solution to Pakistan’s political problems?

Ever since the inception of Pakistan, British colonial system of administration continues to prevail till today. There is a need to abolish the provinces and make the whole of Pakistan one unit and completely eliminate the feudal influence in the rural areas throughout the country. Only then real democracy can take roots and flourish. The present military Government's attempt to establish local governments at District level is a splendid idea but it is not likely to produce any tangible results mainly for the reason that those employed at the National Reconstruction Bureau are either not aware of the ground realities or not competent enough to implement the decisions taken at Federal Government level. General Patton had said, "Issuance of orders and devising plans is 5% of command responsibility, 95% is to ensure that these are implemented correctly." Consequently, throughout the country, corrupt and incompetent candidates mostly from the landed aristocracy and rich business class have succeeded in securing the post of District and Tehsil Nazim. As and when the Provincial and National Assembly elections are held only those candidates will succeed who have the support of these Nazims. Having closely witnessed the local bodies elections in a district of Southern Punjab and read reports on the elections in other parts of the country I can say with confidence that unless remedial steps are immediately taken, the grand scheme of reforms widely publicised through the official media of building up democracy at grass-root level will ultimately end up in a fiasco.

What is the future of Indo- Pakistan in the geo-political sense.

Because of its ideological commitments, the future of Pakistan will have to be considered in isolation from India. The two countries cannot possibly adopt a joint policy for defence and foreign affairs. The inherent ideological differences between the two nations cannot be removed. At the most we can live peacefully as good neighbours if Kashmir problem is resolved but there are remote chances for it. Consequently, our relations with foreign powers will have to be on one to one basis, governed by self-interests. I, personally, cannot think of any other solution to it. Had there been any possibility of living together, there was no need for partition of Indo-Pak subcontinent and creation of independent Muslim state.

Any message that you would like to deliver to the readers of this interview

?

I have already conveyed my candid views through this interview. I do hope that the readers will be able to draw some useful lessons from my personal observations and experiences for a period covering more than 50 years or so.

CONTACT

mazen@csio-ops.com

About the Author

Agha H. Amin , Retired Tank corps major who served in five tank regiments and commanded an independent tank squadron and served in various staff , instructional and research assignments. Presently heads think tank Centre for Study of Intelligence Operations. Editor in Chief of monthly Intelligence Review and monthly Military and Security Review. In his Pakistan Army tenure he wrote three original tactical papers on Reconnaissance Troops Tactical handling, Reconnaissance support group , and RFS Concept. His writings were published in Pakistan Armys prime journals , Pakistan Army Journal and Citadel Journal of Command and Staff College Quetta.

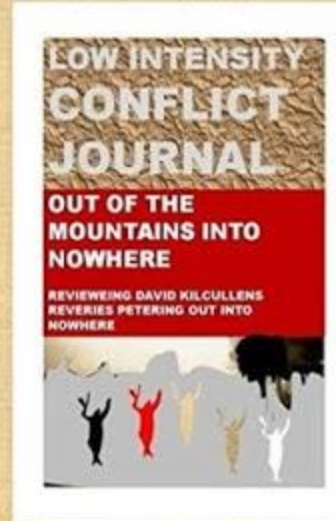
His recommendations regarding bifurcation of officer corps into command and staff cadre advanced in 1998 were later accepted. In addition his recommendation of grouping various corps into army commands advanced in an article published in Citadel Journal in 1998 were accepted in 2005 or so. Wrote Pakistan Armys first tactical paper on Tactical handling of Reconnaissance Troop in 1986 which is now being incorporated in Pakistan Armys most important general staff publication " The Armored Regiment in Battle". Wrote The Essential Clausewitz in 1993, Sepoy Rebellion of 1857-59 in 1998 , Pakistan Army till 1965 in 1999 ,Development of Taliban Factions in Afghanistan and Pakistan (2010) ,Taliban War in Afghanistan (2009). Served as Assistant Editor of Defence Journal ,Executive Editor of globe and Founder Editor of Journal of Afghanistan Studies .

An associate of the think tanks ORBAT and Alexandrian Defense group. Expert in social impact and environmental assessment carried out various LARP surveys for Asian Bank and World Bank projects. He has lectured at various think tanks and organisations worldwide and shares his knowledge without any honorarium and at zero financial benefits. Carried out various oil and gas and power transmission line surveys in West Asia. One time Assistant Editor Defence Journal , Executive Editor Globe, Editor Journal of Afghanistan Studies Feedback is welcome at e mail address L19aircraft@gmail.com

Presently heading **Centre for Study of Intelligence Operations** which he founded in early 2010 and editing Intelligence Review, Indian Military Review and Journal of Book Reviews.

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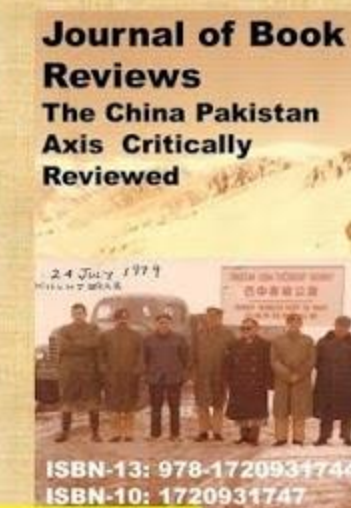
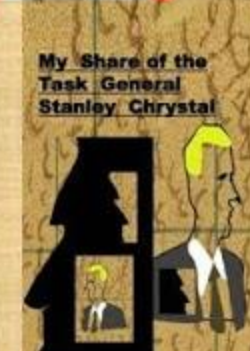
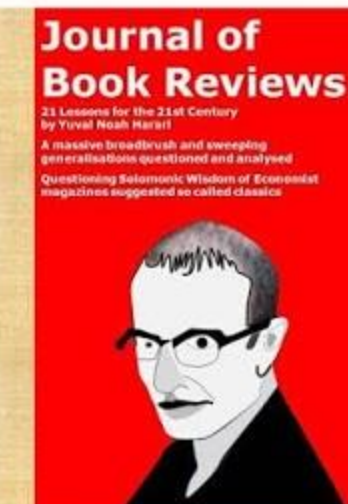
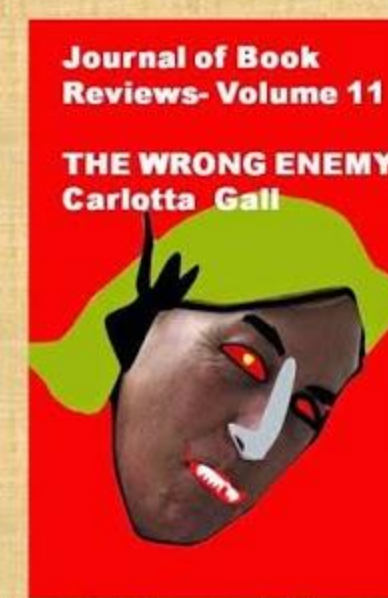
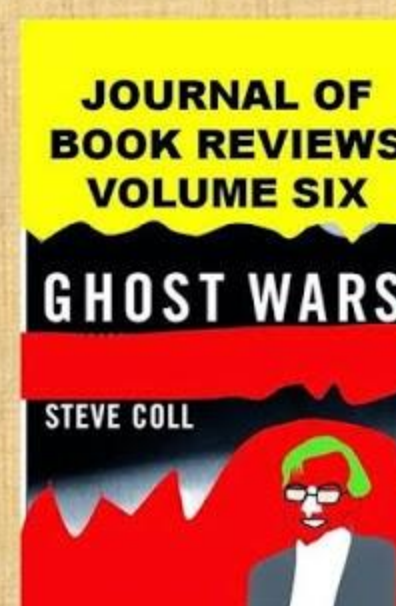
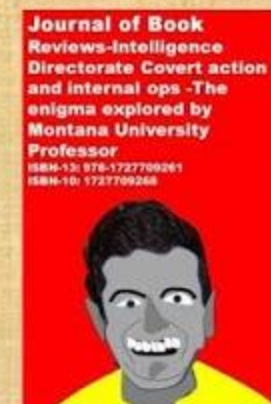
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DOI: 10.13140/RG.2.2.34356.81286

From : Ed Luttwak

MAIL-RECVD... | Inbox

Sent : Saturday, July 19, 2003 5:10 PM

To : pavocavalry@hotmail.com

Subject : Re:

Thank you for your thoughts (1st class strategic thought even when I happen to disagree) .
All powers in a world of powers reach culminating points at various stages . But interim
imbalances can persist for a bit --ie. longer than our lives & much more sometimes .
Empires exist in those interim periods. Re. war at the operational level: low-contrast
enemies can evade destruction but cannot seriously destroy either, only irritate.

EDWARD N. LUTTWAK

>From: "A. H AMIN"

>Date: Fri, 18 Jul 2003 09:50:20 +0000

>

FREE pop-up blocking with the new MSN Toolbar – get it now!

From: A. H AMIN <pavocavalry@hotmail.com>

Sent: Friday, July 18, 2003 9:50 AM



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
THE U.S. ARMY CENTER OF MILITARY HISTORY
103 THIRD AVENUE
FORT LESLEY J. MCNAIR, DC 20319-5058

DAMH-FP

27 July 2007

Dear Major (Retired) Agha Humayun Amin,

I would like to formally invite you along to attend the upcoming Conference of Army Historians (CAH) in Washington DC, 6-9 August 2007. We would be honored if you would present your paper on "Growth of Non State Actors in Pakistan and Afghanistan and their impact on the ongoing Low Intensity War in Afghanistan." I am sure that many in the US Army Historical Community would find your research particularly relevant.

This biennial conference features presentations on joint and combined military history as well as papers presented by civilian historians from government, academia, and members of the international military history community, such as yourself.

The topic of the 2007 CAH is Irregular Warfare, 1775-2007. We greatly appreciate the participation of the Russian Institute of Military History. Our colleagues will be especially happy to meet you at this most interesting conference.

I do look forward to seeing you again and listening to your presentation. I do hope that you will be able to attend.

Respectfully,

Richard G. Davis

Dr. Richard G. Davis
Chief, Field Programs and Historical Services
U.S. Army Center of Military History

August 28, 2011

To Whom It May Concern

Subject: Reference for Mr. Agha Humayun Amin, President of Afghan Toll Transoxonia

Dear Sir/Madam,

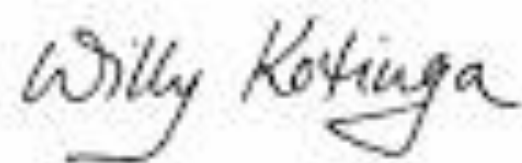
It is without any reservation that we give a high recommendation for the services that Mr. Agha Humayun Amin, President of Transoxiana Afghan Toll, provided to our company on two World Bank funded projects to do a feasibility study on bringing power from the Central Asia region through Afghanistan to Pakistan in 2010 and 2011.

Transoxiana Afghan Toll was our local consultant providing survey services to help us prepare preliminary transmission line routing options through Afghanistan. On two separate projects, he validated routing option and on one of the projects. He also performed an on-site inspection in the critical Salang Pass region to validate placement of transmission infrastructure. He provided us with maps which were used in our reports.

We are very grateful for the services provided and would have no reservations in using their services on future work in Afghanistan and elsewhere.

Should you require additional information, it would be my pleasure to personally respond to your questions.

Best Regards



Willy Kotiuga, Ph.D, Eng.
Senior Director, Power Systems
T&D Division

**LETTER OF REFERENCE
FROM SNC LAVALIN
CANADA FOR
SUCCESSFULLY
PERFORMING TWO WORLD
BANK SPONSORED STUDIES**

FICHTNER

Fichtner GmbH & Co. KG
Sarweystraße 3
70191 Stuttgart
Germany

Date: 31 July 2012

ADB - TA -7853 (REG)
Afghanistan and Turkmenistan - Regional Power Interconnection Project
Survey by TRANSOXIANA Majeed Team

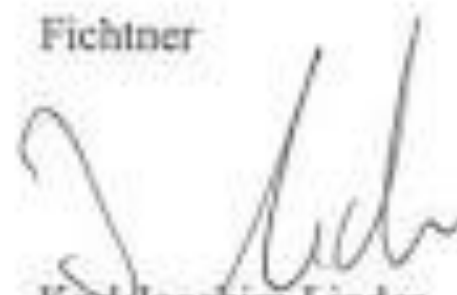
This is to confirm, that the Majeed Team of TRANSOXANIA is working on behalf of FICHTNER GmbH & Co KG for the above mentioned Project.

Their task is to survey the routing of the transmission line and to measure the coordinates of the line from the border to Shibirgan and Mazar. At present they work in the provinces of Faryah, Shibirgan and Balkh.

We kindly would like to ask for your support by informing the related institutions and police chiefs to enable the surveying team to take the required measurements and photographs. As we are working on a very tight time schedule your immediate action would be appreciated.

Best regards,

Fichtner


Karl-Joachim Linder
Executive Director




Frank Bickel
Deputy Team Leader



22 May, 1995

Dear MAJ(Retired) Agha Humayun Amin,

Thank you so much for your letter and your interest in leadership and character development. I have sent your work to our military leadership department (The Department of Behavioral Science & Leadership) for their dissemination and review. West Point prides itself as being the premier leadership institution in the U.S., and we constantly strive to produce "leaders of character" for our nation. Our Military Art class draws heavily upon the works of Clausewitz; therefore, your summary will prove interesting to our own instructors.

Thanks again for your letter, your books and your interest. I wish you the best of luck in the future.

Sincerely,

Freddy E. McFarren
Brigadier General, USA
Commandant of Cadets

MAJ (R) Agha Humayun Amin
P.O. Box 6027
Lahore Cantt Pakistan
92342/358556



CENTER *for the* STUDY of INTELLIGENCE

27 September 1996

Agha Humayun Amin

Lahore Cant.
Pakistan

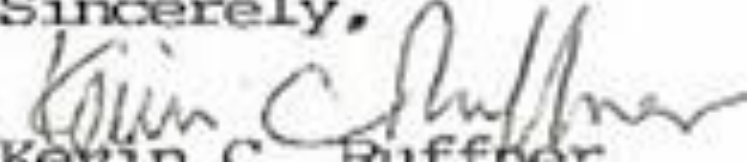
Dear Major Amin:

Many thanks for your book, The Essential Clausewitz, which arrived on the 25th. This looks fascinating and will really help me understand Clausewitz better. I am currently enrolled in the U.S. Army's Command and General Staff College, so this is a timely book.

We are keeping very busy here since you were here in April for the Society for Military History's conference. In fact, we have another conference next week on Venona, the intercepts of the Soviet communications. I am sending you copies of the Spring and Summer newsletters which will keep you posted on our activities.

Once again, thank you very much for thinking of the History Staff and your book will make a welcome addition to our library. Best wishes.

Sincerely,


Kevin C. Ruffner
CIA History Staff

Central Intelligence Agency • Washington, D.C. 20505
(703) 351-2698 Fax (703) 243-8343

